

TRANSCRIPT PREPARED BY THE CLERK OF THE LEGISLATURE
Transcriber's Office
FLOOR DEBATE

April 23, 2001 LB 536

ethanol, but it is 85 percent ethanol and 15 percent gasoline. I'd like to read you just a little bit. E-85 is a fuel blend containing 85 percent ethanol and 15 percent gasoline. E-85 is considered an alternative fuel under federal and state laws designed to increase our domestic energy security and reduce vehicle emissions. It looks and fuels just like regular gasoline. However, ethanol does not contain many of the harmful carcinogens and other toxic chemicals found in gasoline. E-85 fuel has many benefits as a renewable energy source. It helps create a cleaner environment, healthier air, and a stronger U.S. economy while reducing overseas oil imports. E-85 has the highest oxygen content of any fuel available today making it burn cleaner than gasoline. Production and use of E-85 instead of gasoline results in a 35 percent reduction in greenhouse gas emissions. EPA studies have shown that high blend ethanol fuels can reduce harmful exhaust emissions by more than 50 percent. Flexible fuel vehicles are especially designed to run on any ethanol fuel blend up to 85 percent ethanol. Special on-board diagnostics read the fuel blend enabling drivers to fuel with E-85 or gasoline if E-85 is not available without worrying about what is in the tank. E-85 has superior performance characteristics because of its high octane rating. It has 110 octane compared to 89 in the average gasoline. Currently in Nebraska, we have 8,500 flexible fuel vehicles of which many of those are owned by the state of Nebraska. We have a growing number of vehicles that can operate on E-85. Ford Motor Company, General Motors, and Daimler Chrysler Corporation all offer E-85 vehicles for sale to the public. And I don't have the figures in front of me, but I believe it's the 2002 or 2003 models of Ford Explorers and Chevy Tahoes that are going to have E-85 motors in them. These automakers offer E-85 engines as standard equipment in their vehicles meaning that there is no additional cost. The vehicles are proven reliable and come with factory warranties. Now this is a possibility of what we have to come in the future. We have the possibility of selling a lot of ethanol fuel in this country and we need to take...step up to the plate and we need to provide our plants in Nebraska the opportunity to build and we need to do it now. I had something that was sent in from a friend of mine. He said ethanol is a fuel, not just an extender. Even Henry Ford saw the value of ethanol as a fuel as his Model T was designed to run on ethanol.